

REMARKS

Claims 1-35, all the claims pending in the application, stand rejected. Applicant has amended claims 1, 7, 8, 11, 13-22 and 25-32. No new matter has been added.

As a preliminary matter, Applicant wishes to thank the Examiner for the courtesy extended to Applicants representative during an interview in which the comments of the Examiner in the Advisory Action were explained, particularly with respect to the manner in which Fig. 7B of Sone is being applied, and the possible bases for patentability that were discussed. Applicant respectfully submits that the claims are patentable over the teachings of Sone because nothing in Sone shows a connection music having a duration that is shorter than the main music, as now claimed.

Claim Rejections - 35 U.S.C. § 103

Claims 1-35 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over “Yamada Sone”(5,919,047) in view of Tsai et al (6,352,432). This rejection is traversed for at least the following reasons.

In the Advisory Action issued after Applicants filed an amendment under 37 C.F.R. § 1.116, the Examiner noted that Fig. 7(B) of Sone, which shows two main pieces merged by fade in and fade out techniques, would be extendable to a medley of three main pieces. The Examiner further suggested that the second of the three merged pieces would be the connecting piece, that the combination of three pieces had the timing characteristics as claimed, and that the three pieces would be stored separately.

Applicants asserted in the interview that the second piece in the proposed three-piece medley would not be a connecting piece because it is a full main piece. Applicant asserted that at least one distinction was that the second piece is thus about the same size as the first and third pieces. By contrast, the connection piece in the present invention is intended solely to be a joint between two main pieces and is substantially shorter than the first and/or second main pieces. Moreover, the term “connection” piece clearly refers to music that joins two main pieces desired by the player. The purpose of the connection piece is to provide a smooth transition between two

main pieces so that the intensity and enjoyment of a game while one piece is played would not be lost as the machine transitions to a second piece.

Applicants have amended claims 1, 7, 8, 10, 11, 13-22 and 25-32 in order to emphasize that the connection music is substantially shorter than a main music. Applicants respectfully submit that this feature distinguishes the invention from the prior art. This limitation finds support in the original disclosure, for example, in Figure 5 which shows that the connection music MI2, MI3 is substantially shorter than the original music MO2, MO3. Further, this durational relationship is discussed in the specification starting at page 24 where the timing relationships between the original music and connection music are discussed. For example, this section of the specification teaches that embodiments of the present invention may have a sporting feel because the original music pieces MO1, MO2, MO3 are output at relatively short intervals each accompanied by a corresponding game stage, making the game more attractive. The short intervals between original music pieces, as shown in Figure 5 are accompanied by the connection music.

The Examiner appears to agree with the Applicant that Fig. 7(C) does not teach the claimed invention and that purposes for the indirect joint in Fig. 7(B) and 7(C) are incompatible and, in any event, their disclosure does not support combining them together. Thus, Applicant requests that the application be passed to issue as early as possible.

In view of the above, reconsideration and allowance of this application are now believed to be in order, and such actions are hereby solicited. If any points remain in issue which the Examiner feels may be best resolved through a personal or telephone interview, the Examiner is kindly requested to contact the undersigned at the telephone number listed below.

U.S. Application No. 09/778,055
Amendment under 37 C.F.R. § 1.114(c)

Atty. Docket No. Q62904

The USPTO is directed and authorized to charge all required fees, except for the Issue Fee and the Publication Fee, to Deposit Account No. 19-4880. Please also credit any overpayments to said Deposit Account.

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